

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 08669 010719Z

17

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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USIA-15 AID-20 IGA-02 OMB-01 EB-11 IO-14 DRC-01 /135 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6338

UNCLAS SAIGON 8669

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, PINS

SUBJECT: FAA SECTION 32 - POLITICAL PRISONERS

REFS: A) STATE 068545; B) SAIGON 5239; C) STATE 135179

1. SECTION 32, ITS LEGISLATIVE HISTORY, THE FACT THAT THE FAA OF 1973 ALSO CONTAINED BAN ON ANY AID TO POLICE, THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT AND THE INTENSIVE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN MOUNTED BY VIETNAMESE OPPONENTS IN THE U.S. ALL THESE FACTORS HAVE COMBINED TO MAKE THIS PROVISION OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1973 OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THIS MISSION.

2. THEREFORE, SHORTLY AFTER THE ENACTMENT IN DECEMBER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 32 WERE DISCUSSED BY THE AMBASSADOR WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WITH THE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, AND WITH THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BY OTHER SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC MISSION WITH ALL SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE GVN WHOSE OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITIES COULD EVEN REMOTELY INCLUDE THE SUBSTANCE OF SECTION 32.

3. AS A PART OF OUR ONGOING CONCERN, THIS MISSION HAS CONTINUED TO RAISE INDIVIDUAL CASES CITED BY SUCH PROPAGANDA GROUPS AS THE INDO-CHINA RESOURCE GROUP AND ITS CONGERIES

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 08669 010719Z

OF AFFILIATES IN THE U.S. OR BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE

CONGRESS. WE HAVE YET TO ESTABLISH A SINGLE CASE, FALLING UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 32, AS "POLITICAL PRISONERS" ARE DEFINED EITHER WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXAMPLES CITED IN PARAGRAPH 5 OF REF A AS "STANDARD ENJOYING ALREADY ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL APPROVAL AND RESPECT," OR WITHIN ANY OTHER DEFINITION ON WHICH REASONABLE AND DISPASSIONATE OBSERVERS COULD AGREE.

4. IN THE COURSE OF THESE ONGOING CONTINUOUS DISCUSSIONS, PRESIDENT THIEU APPROVED THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT THAT INVITATIONS BE EXTENDED TO A GROUP OF UNITED STATES SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN TO VISIT THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AND LOOK INTO THE QUESTION AND ANY OTHER MATTER IT MIGHT CHOOSE IN ORDER THAT IT MIGHT ESTABLISH TO ITS OWN SATISFACTION THE ACCURACY OF THE STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES IN APRIL 1973. IN SELECTING THIS GROUP THE GVN AVOIDED EXTENDING INVITATIONS TO EITHER ITS KNOWN SUPPORTERS OR ITS KNOWN CRITICS, CHOOSING INSTEAD INDIVIDUALS WHOSE REPUTATIONS FOR FAIRNESS, IMPARTIALITY AND OBJECTIVITY WERE UNASSAILABLE. IN THE NAME OF THE PRESIDENT SUCH INVITATIONS WERE PERSONALLY EXTENDED BY THE AMBASSADOR OF THE RVN IN WASHINGTON. THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF THEIR IDENTITIES. THE GVN, AS A MATTER OF NORMAL COURTESY, DID NOT PUBLICLY REVEAL THE FACT OF THE INVITATION OR THE NAMES OF THOSE INVITED ALTHOUGH IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE BEEN TO ITS ADVANTAGE TO DO SO TO COUNTER THE VICIOUS AND FALSE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN BEING WAGED BY ITS ENEMIES. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE INVITATION IS STILL OUTSTANDING.

5. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THIS MISSION HAS ALREADY, ON INNUMERABLE OCCASIONS, CARRIED OUT THE INSTRUCTION CONVEYED IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF REF C AND WILL, OF COURSE, AGAIN REFER TO SECTION 32 IN THE COURSE OF THE MEETINGS BY GVN OFFICIALS WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS VISITING SAIGON THIS WEEK.

6. WE AGAIN REITERATE THE CONCLUSION CONVEYED IN REF B THAT SECTION 32 OF THE FAA OF 1973 WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE STATUS OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN THE RVN.

7. IN ORDER TO AFFORD DEPARTMENT GREATEST POSSIBLE LATITUDE
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PAGE 03 SAIGON 08669 010719Z

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Message Attributes

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